

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1, 4-6, 14,17, 18 and 23 are amended.

Claims 2, 3, 7-11 and 19-22 are original.

Claims 5, 12-13, 15, 16 and 24-25 are canceled.

1. (Currently amended) An AFO / contracture foot splint device for alleviating and correcting foot deformities, treating foot drop, preventing decubitus ulceration of the calcaneus (heel bone), by maintaining the foot in a fixed, stable, yet comfortable position following surgery or other medical procedure performed on the foot, said device comprising

- a) a leg engaging portion;
- b) a foot supporting portion;
- c) a heel portion having a heel well;
- d) a toe extension portion
- e) a disposable liner;

wherein the heel portion prevents contact between an upper surface of the heel portion of the device and the heel of the wearer thereby eliminating chafing, or abrasive contact, or decubitus ulceration, or pain-inducing pressure; ~~and~~

wherein said disposable liner is a single piece that extends from the toe extension portion to the leg engaging portion of the AFO / contracture foot splint device, said single piece having a leg pocket (42) and a toe pocket (40), where said leg pocket (42) fits onto the leg engaging portion and said toe pocket (40) fits onto said toe extension portion, thereby securing the disposable liner to the splint device;

wherein said disposable liner has re-closable fastening elements to secure said disposable liner to the leg and the foot; and

wherein the disposable liner is comprised of a fluid permeable layer, an absorbent layer and moisture proof layer.

2. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said disposable liner further comprises an antimicrobial additive.

3. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said antimicrobial additive is triclosan.

4. (amended) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 3, wherein the leg engaging portion, the heel portion, the foot supporting portion, and the toe extension portion comprise ~~are portions comprising~~ a shell.

5. (canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim ~~4~~ 5, wherein said ~~disposable liner has hook and loop straps~~ are affixed to ~~on~~ the moisture proof layer ~~to secure said disposable liner to the leg and the foot of the user.~~

7. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 6, wherein said disposable liner has a heel area that is cut out forming a heel opening, wherein the heel opening is gathered and stitched or welded to draw the foot of the liner upward to the correct angle and eliminate bulkiness and pressure points.

8. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 6, wherein said device is further provided with additional adjustable straps attached to flaps which overlap the disposable liner.

9. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device according to claim 1, wherein said absorbent layer is a multi-strata layer of a relatively high level of a superabsorbent in a stratum, and a high level of a cellulosic wood fiber matrix or pulp in an adjacent stratum.

10. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 9, wherein said disposable liner incorporates an antimicrobial additive therein.

11. (original) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim 10, wherein said antimicrobial additive is triclosan.

12. (canceled)

13. (canceled)

14. (Currently amended) The AFO / contracture foot splint device as claimed in claim ~~1~~ 13, wherein said re-closable fastening elements are ~~disposable liner~~ has hook and loop straps on the moisture proof layer to secure said disposable liner to the leg and the foot.

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (Currently amended) A liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device, wherein said liner is a disposable liner that is sufficiently soft and flexible so as to comfortably conform to body surfaces and provide for substantially a close fit to prevent leakage, said liner comprising:

- a) a fluid permeable layer;
- b) an absorbent layer. The function of the absorbent layer is to absorb and retain body fluids entering the disposable liner through the fluid permeable layer;
- c) a moisture proof layer which is a liquid impervious back sheet disposed on the outer surface of the liner, and is designed to prevent the leakage of fluids; and

wherein said disposable liner is a single piece that, when fitted to the AFO / contracture foot splint device, extends from a toe extension portion to a leg engaging portion of the AFO / contracture foot splint device, said single piece having a leg pocket (42) and a toe pocket (40), where said leg pocket (42) fits onto the leg engaging portion and said toe pocket (40) fits onto said toe extension portion, thereby securing the liner to the splint device; and

wherein the moisture proof layer is breathable and has a high MVTR.

18. (Currently amended) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device, as claimed in claim 17, wherein ~~the~~ said liner is further comprised of one piece comprising:

- a) a toe end;
- b) a foot region;
- c) a leg end;
- d) a leg region;
- e) a heel region;

wherein the foot region has winged extensions terminated with fastening elements, said winged extensions being foldable over the foot and fastened, thereby securing the foot region;

wherein the leg end of the liner has tabular extensions terminated with re-closable fastening elements, said tabular extensions being foldable around the calf of the leg and fastened, thereby securing the leg region of the disposable liner to the leg;

wherein said heel region of the liner has an opening, which enables a portion of a the wearer's heel to project through the heel region into a heel "well" of the a splint device; and

wherein the liner on either side of the heel opening is gathered and stitched or welded to draw the foot of the liner upward to the correct angle and eliminate bulkiness and pressure points.

19. (original) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device, as claimed in claim 18, wherein the absorbent layer is comprised of a cellulosic wood fiber matrix or pulp, which pulp is capable of absorbing large quantities of fluid.

20. (original) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device according to claim 19, wherein the absorbent layer is further comprised of a superabsorbent amongst the fiber matrix.

21. (original) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device according to claim 20, wherein the absorbent layer is further comprised of complex forming agents, which are cationic and anionic binders for the superabsorbents.

22. (original) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device according to claim 18, wherein the absorbent layer is further comprised of an antimicrobial additive.

23. (amended) The liner for an AFO / contracture foot splint device according to claim 22 ~~20~~, wherein said antimicrobial additive is triclosan.

24. (canceled)

25. (canceled)